

whole, while chest level brings them to a height where full light may reach them over the shoulder of the observer.

For the loan of valuable material and their helpful comments I am indebted to E. Thomas Gilliard of The American Museum of Natural History (New York), and to Austin L. Rand of The Chicago Natural History Museum.

On the occurrence of the Nuthatch, *Sitta europaea* Linnæus, in Iraq. *Sitta europaea davidi* ssp. nov.

by DR. JAMES M. HARRISON

Received 10th January, 1955

No form of the European Nuthatch has previously been recorded in Iraq. It was therefore with considerable interest that, amongst a collection of other birds sent back by Flight Lieutenant D. L. Harrison, there was a specimen of this species collected in Kurdistan in the autumn of 1954.

This example is a male and was shot at Ser 'Amadia, Iraq, on August 22nd, 1954, at 6000 feet altitude in a terrain of scrub oak which forms extensive mountain forests, the other common tree being the poplar, which occupies the valleys. The species was only observed in the scrub oak zone.

Description: Comparison of this specimen has been made with the relevant adjacent populations, from which it was recognised as being quite distinct.

From *S. e. persica* Witherby (W. Persia), it is different in having a decided ochraceous-buff wash on the underparts and in not being quite so pale grey above. When compared with *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zarudny (N. Persia), it is again more colourful in the above respects, but from this form it is at once distinguishable by the totally different bill form, for whereas *S. e. davidi*, *S. e. persica* Witherby, *S. e. caucascia* Reichenow and *S. e. levantina* Hartert all possess very slender bills, *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zardudny possesses a longer and far more robust bill. From *S. e. caucascia* Reichenow, and *S. e. levantina* Hartert, the new form is far paler both above and below. Compared with birds from Bulgaria, which, in my opinion, also match those from Macedonia, and which have recently been separated as *S. e. harrisoni* Voous¹, (Type locality S.W. Bulgaria), *S. e. davidi* is a less golden-yellow on the underparts and is also paler blue-grey above.

Since the size and form of the bill are of considerable importance in the taxonomy of Nuthatches, I append a tabulation of the bill length (I), bill height (IIa), and width (IIb), for the immediately adjacent populations. These last measurements are taken at the base of the bill at the feather margin. The bill coefficient (III) represents the multiplication of (IIa) and (IIb). From these, it will be seen that, in general, the bill of *S. e. davidi*

¹ VOOUS, K.H., 1953, *Ardea*, 41, p. 10. The Distributional History of the Nuthatch, *Sitta europaea* L.

shows a close affinity with four of the races investigated, but is markedly divergent in this respect from *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zarudny.

COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF BILLS
(in millimetres from base of skull)
I length; IIa height; IIb width; III bill coefficient

	<i>S. e. davidi</i>	<i>S. e. persica</i>	<i>S. e. caucasica</i>	<i>S. e. levantina</i>	<i>S. e. rubiginosa</i>
I	♂ 18.5	♂♂ 15, 16, 18, 19 ♀♀ 15.5, 17.5, 18	♂♂ 18, 18	♂♂ 16, 18, 19 ♀♀ 16, 18, 19	♂♂ 20, 21, 25
II	(a) 4 (b) 6	♂♂ (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 ♀♀ (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 4 (b) 6 (a) 6 (b) 6	♂♂ (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6	♂♂ (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 ♀♀ (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6 (a) 5 (b) 6	♂♂ (a) 5 (b) 7 (a) 6 (b) 7 (a) 6 (b) 9
III	24	24-36	30	30	35-54

While it is admitted that the numbers in the groups are minimal, it is believed nevertheless, that the figures may be significant.

It is also of course, realised that the creation of a new form on a single specimen is open to criticism but, on the other hand, this example, both on colour and on structure, proved so distinct that it was decided to adopt this course.

Named in honour of Flight Lieutenant D. L. Harrison, R.A.F., who collected the specimen.

Type: ♂ adult, August 22nd, 1954, Ser 'Amadia, Iraq, 6000 ft. In my collection.

Measurements: Wing 83 mm.; bill 18.5 mm.; height 4 mm.; width 6 mm.; bill coefficient 24 mm.; tarsus 17 mm.; tail 42 mm.

The first occurrence of the Bateleur and Red Kite in Iraq

by DR. JEFFERY G. HARRISON

Received 29th December, 1954.

On October 8th, 1954, I was fortunate to see a Bateleur, *Terathopius ecaudatus* (Daudin) as I was travelling along the Baghdad road, between Habbaniya and Feluja in Iraq. The bird, which was quite unmistakable, flew over our Land Rover within about fifteen yards of me. It was predominantly a black-bodied eagle, with long, round-ended wings and a